Official Souvenir Program

VAN WERT COUNTY

Ohio Sesqui-Centennial & Pageant

September 10-11-12, 1953

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50¢

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OFFICIAL PROGRAM

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OF VAN WERT COUNTY

Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of
Van Wert County and the State of Ohio

HELD AT VAN WERT, OHIO
SEPTEMBER 10-11-12, 1953

The Van Wert County Sesqui-Centennial Pageant Committee wishes to extend a hearty welcome to each and everyone who joins with us in this celebration of Ohio's 150th birthday.

We wish to acknowledge and express our appreciation for the invaluable help of the many organizations and individuals who have contributed to the success of this occasion. The time and effort expended by many public spirited individuals is beyond ordinary thanks.

As this book must go to press quite some time before the final arrangements for all the events of this Sesqui-Centennial are completed, it is apparent that it is impossible to list names and give credit for many of the committees and organizations doing the work. But we do give them the highest praise and know that they will find satisfaction in knowing that they have done their work well.

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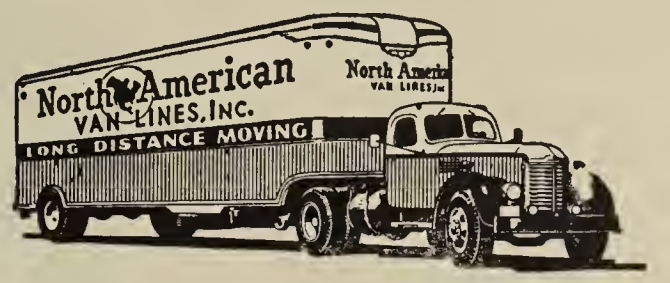

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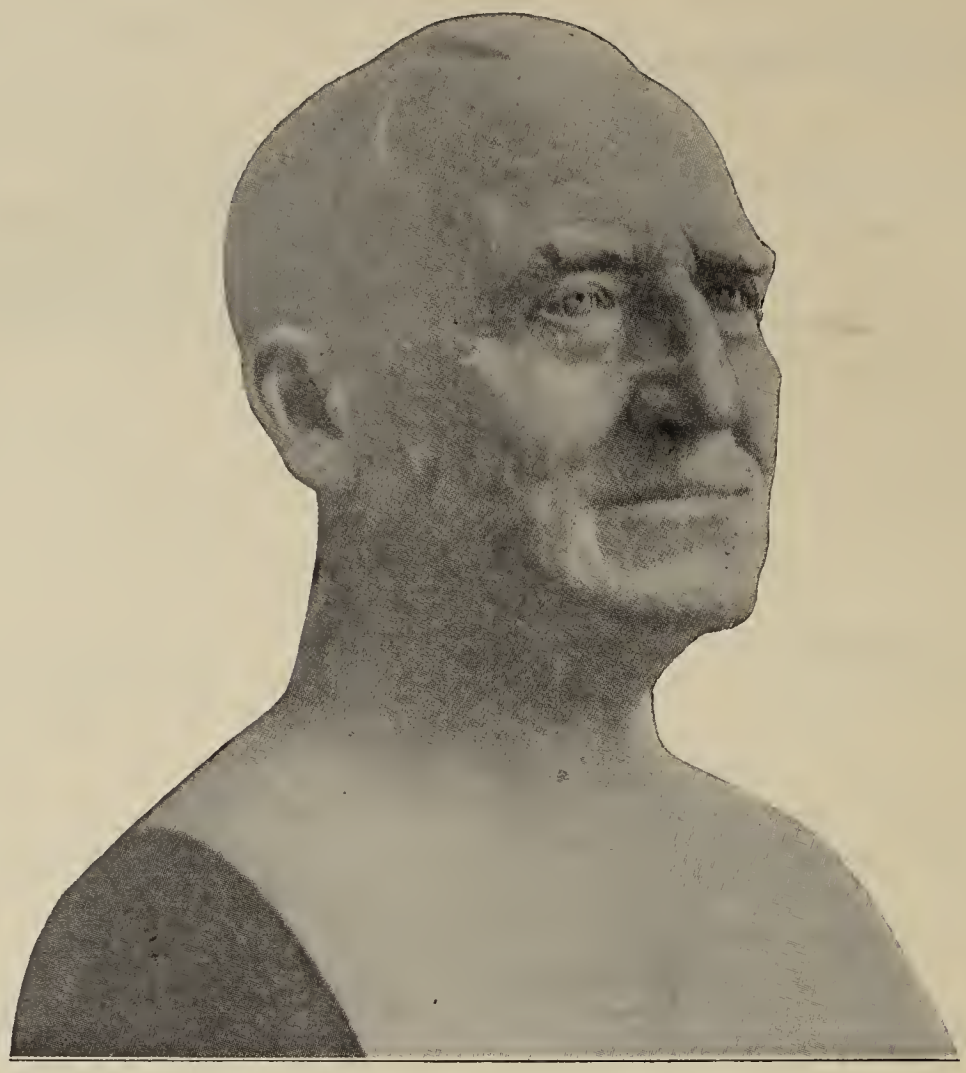

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To all others who have contributed to the success of the pageant but due to press deadlines, we were unable to acknowledge on this page, our grateful thanks.

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OHIO SESQUI-CENTENNIAL

VAN WERT COUNTY'S CONTRIBUTION

Ohio, celebrating its Sesqui-Centennial, is a stalwart leader of these United States. Van Wert County, like the State of which it is a part, can acclaim with pride, its wealth and power which have played a part in State history.

Participating in this 150th anniversary of historic achievement in the state with our programs, pageant and printed accounts, let us review with humility and give thanks for our past development, the splendid condition of our present society, looking forward to ways to create finer means of living for those who are to follow.

An historic account would be incomplete without descriptive material about location, topography and mention of the obstacles overcome by the first settlers as well as their achievements.

Van Wert County is bounded on the north by Paulding County, east by Allen County, Mercer County on the south, and the Indiana State line forms the western border. Our land is level—so characteristic of northwestern Ohio. The land was covered with dense forests and parts of it were covered by the Black Swamp.

THE FOUNDING OF WILLSHIRE

In 1820, Captain James Riley purchased a tract of land on "The Rapid in the St. Mary's River" called "Devil's Race Ground". This was the beginning of the plat known as Willshire. Riley erected a mill after building a dam and moved his family there in 1821. Captain James Riley, with his son James Watson Riley, held a contract with the government to survey the northwestern Ohio lands, especially the land about the Maumee River. Captain Riley was a leader of men and his letters, speeches and reports are a matter of record in Van Wert and Mercer County histories. Willshire became an important place on the route to the military outpost and settlement known as Fort Wayne. The first Court House was located in Willshire. Today a small log cabin stands to commemorate the exact spot.

PIONEER DIFFICULTIES

In 1830, the population of Van Wert County is known to have been 49 persons—certainly most of those 49 were residents of Willshire.

The following years were hard ones. The land was covered with a dense growth of trees of all kinds. The land being very level it was covered with water much of the year. Swamps were numerous and wild game abundant. Those early settlers overcame the forest, drained the soil and protected themselves from the wild animals, thereby making the fine communities we now enjoy. These early pioneers, as did all settlers, made the most of their

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resources. Their first effort was to clear some land to plant, and build a cabin. They then turned their attention to the rules of government as their number increased. There are those today who will remember the fields of cut-over timber, fields resembling thousands of meat chopping blocks, growing corn planted among those stumps, the split-rail boundary lines, log buildings—all the natural result of well-known pioneer effort and industry.

TRANSPORTATION

Growth in population was slow because trails that later became roads were the only means for travel. The completion of the Miami Erie canal in 1845 probably gave the greatest impetus to the pioneers in this area for the promise of One Dollar wheat spurred the farmers on to greater efforts to clear the land. Their combined efforts brought industry and business enterprise—all based on natural resources. Early settlers told of making the trip to far-off Piqua to have grain milled, their method of transportation being the use of the two front wheels of a wagon, upon which a box-like arrangement which had been built to hold the sacks of grain. Horses were forced to swim across the streams as the carts were floated across by means of logs placed underneath the wagon axle. Another means of conveyance was a crude mud-boat said by some descendants of these pioneers to have been a forked sapling with the load lashed to the forked part and dragged between oxen.

THE CANALS

It was inevitable that transportation should play an important part in the development of this area. Students of early Ohio history know the importance the Ohio River played in the opening of the West and that Lake Erie was next in importance in that passage west. Canals were then made linking the Ohio River with Lake Erie. The Miami Erie Canal, marking the dividing line between Van Wert and Allen Counties, encouraged settlers to come to Van Wert County. Many families relate stories, told them by their grandparents of having walked from Lima, where the railroad ended, to their homes in far-off Willshire.

It is interesting to note that the Van Wert Town Creek, in early days, was of great importance and probably greater size, a small channel cutting through Main Street a few feet west of Jefferson Street and the main channel in the location it now occupies. The territory lying in between was frequently covered with water. At one time the town boasted of a boat landing on the banks of the creek.

The first jail was built of logs in 1838, hewed on all four sides and notched together. It

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also had a floor of fitted timbers and the ceiling was nearly escape-proof, being made of Linn logs ten inches square. This early jail cost the county $483.00.

COMING OF THE "IRON HORSE"

It was in 1853 that the Ohio and Indiana Railroad, now the Pennsylvania, reached the town of Van Wert. This railroad was the result of a survey made in 1848-49, and was the corporation formed under an act of the legislature in 1850. The act provided that the County Commissioners, with the consent of the voters, could subscribe to the Capital stock of the railroad a sum not to exceed $100,000. The townships were also permitted to subscribe to the extent of $15,000. While records do not show Van Wert County Commissioners subscribed this amount, the story has always prevailed that Van Wert City raised $15,000 and the requirement was made that the road bed was to go directly through the city—this making the two curves that now exist on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

The first rail lines were narrow gauge. The rails were made of hardwood and easily built, consequently the roads branched to include many small communities. Many of these lines were later discontinued after much land speculation.

Another method of financing the building of railroads was the acceptance of notes from the farmers and business men in payment for stock. The Delphos and Kokomo railway Company, now the Nickel Plate, was constructed in 1878, made possible with the issueing of notes payable on January 1, 1879 providing the road was completed or in condition for a locomotive to traverse the road between Delphos and Willshire. In order to comply the company had the last few miles constructed by laying rails on a snow roadbed and having the engine run into Willshire. In the late seventies the Home Improvement Company built the Cincinnati Great Northern, now the New York Central, running north and south through Van Wert County, to connect with other company roads, making it possible by 1882 to go from Cincinnati to the State of Michigan. The Chicago and Atlantic, now known as the Erie, was constructed in 1882. Of interest to many was the Van Wert-Paulding Railroad that extended from Richey station into Paulding County in order that timber could be obtained for stave factories after the supply of timber in our own county was exhausted. Van Wert County was later crossed from east to west by an interurban electric railway completed in January 1905 and discontinued in 1933. The number of railroad employees in Van Wert County at one time exceeded one thousand persons.

USE OF TIMBER

Following the Civil War with the development of the railroads, Van Wert County's destiny was linked with timber and the resulting wood products. The containers for shipping were barrels,. small and large, tight fitting for liquids and loosely made for other materials. These barrels were used for everything transported and they were made entirely of wood. The forests of Van Wert literally went into the manufacture of parts of these kegs and barrels. Manufacture of staves for barrels was the natural result of using the material available. Everything was shipped in barrels and stave factories at one time were the industrial giants of this area. Records prove there were probably in 1870 — twelve in Van Wert city, one in Convoy and two in Delphos.

The stave factories provided work for hundreds of men, first in felling the trees and then drying, milling and shaping the staves. Items manufactured later included wagons, buggies, stirrups, bolts for furniture, handles and other lumber products.

The first saw mill was erected by Samuel M. Clark west of the Cincinnati Northern Shops. Subsequent saw mills were operated by ___ Stage, William Parkinson, Jerry and Wash-

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ington Zeigler, and Joseph Gleason. The Gleason mill was located on the site now occupied by the Dull Lumber Company. These early mills were originally up-right or muling saws, being replaced later by the circular saws.

Among other early industries we find tanneries operated by John F. Gabby, D. H. Clippinger and John Malick. Brick kilns operated by William Groscost, Thomas L. Lehew and Rupright Brothers. Probably all of these kilns were located in what is now the county fair grounds and the pond on these grounds is the result of their early activities.

But the history of this county until 1900 was woven about the availability of timber. It is a known fact even today that the white oak found in this area is better than any other place in the United States or Canada, serving the purpose of builders of fishing boats, docks and dredges.

FROM TIMBER TO TILLAGE

During the 1800's it was apparent that timber would soon be exhausted. Attention was then turned to farming. Ditches were needed and here another example of thrift and industry was demonstrated by the building of the ditches to remove the water and make the soil available for plowing. This was required in order to bring the land north of the "Ridge" or Lincoln Highway (route No. 30) as it is known today, into profitable cultivation. Geologists state the Ridge road was at one time the southern shore of Lake Erie. Picture, if you can, the building of those drainage ditches found along the many roads north of the Ridge. Then imagine the effort required in the building of the small outlets in the fields which were dug by hand, filled with brush and planks to form an inverted V. Later burned tile was used in the ditching of these fields. The ditches were used to remove the water, drain the land and attract plant roots to greater depth. Eventually records show that drain tile was manufactured in every township in our county.

The stories of log rolling—the piling of trees that were later burned, the destruction of forests now considered as wasteful, all prove the industry of settlers from New England states, Pennsylvania, New York, even those countries of Germany, England, Wales and Ireland who migrated to cultivate this rich land we now enjoy. They were patient, plodding and thrifty, developing the farms, building homes and industries. Plowing and planting a field full of stumps would certainly try the patience of a farmer today!

A FARM COUNTY

By 1900 this was a farming community. Corn, wheat and oats were the principal crops. Sugar beets have been grown successfully here and the first planting of soya beans this side of the Ohio-Pennsylvania line was made 5 miles south of Van Wert city, it being the second planting in the state. Van Wert County's million bushel production of soya beans in 1939 was the largest production of soya beans in any Ohio county and the development and production has been phenominal.

At one time hogs and horses were the "stock in trade" raised for shipment and fine draft horses raised in Van Wert County were sought in the great horse markets of the country. Today we see instead fine herds of dairy cattle grazing in the pastures providing milk for a world famous cheese.

CULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

When the land was cleared, drained and made profitable, attention of the citizens was turned to schools and churches. The first school was built in Van Wert city. Prior to this, knowledge was imparted on mother's knee and through experience of hard work. By 1855

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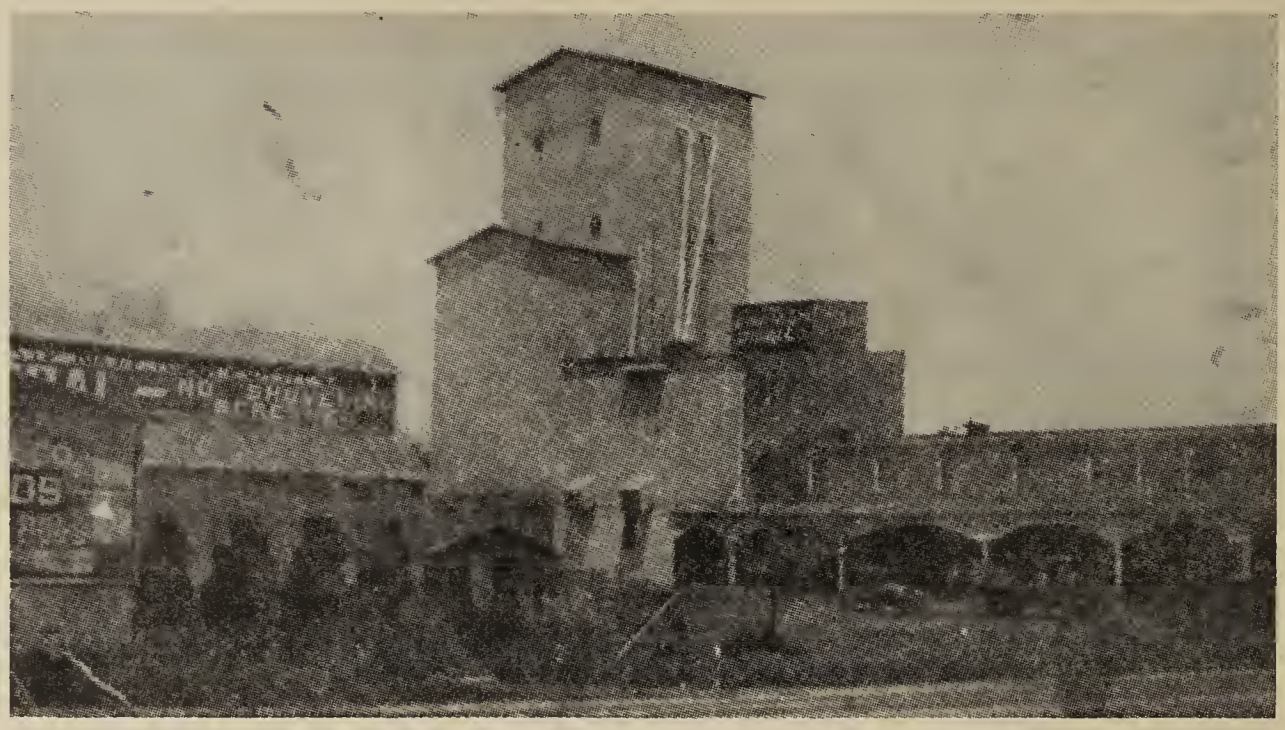
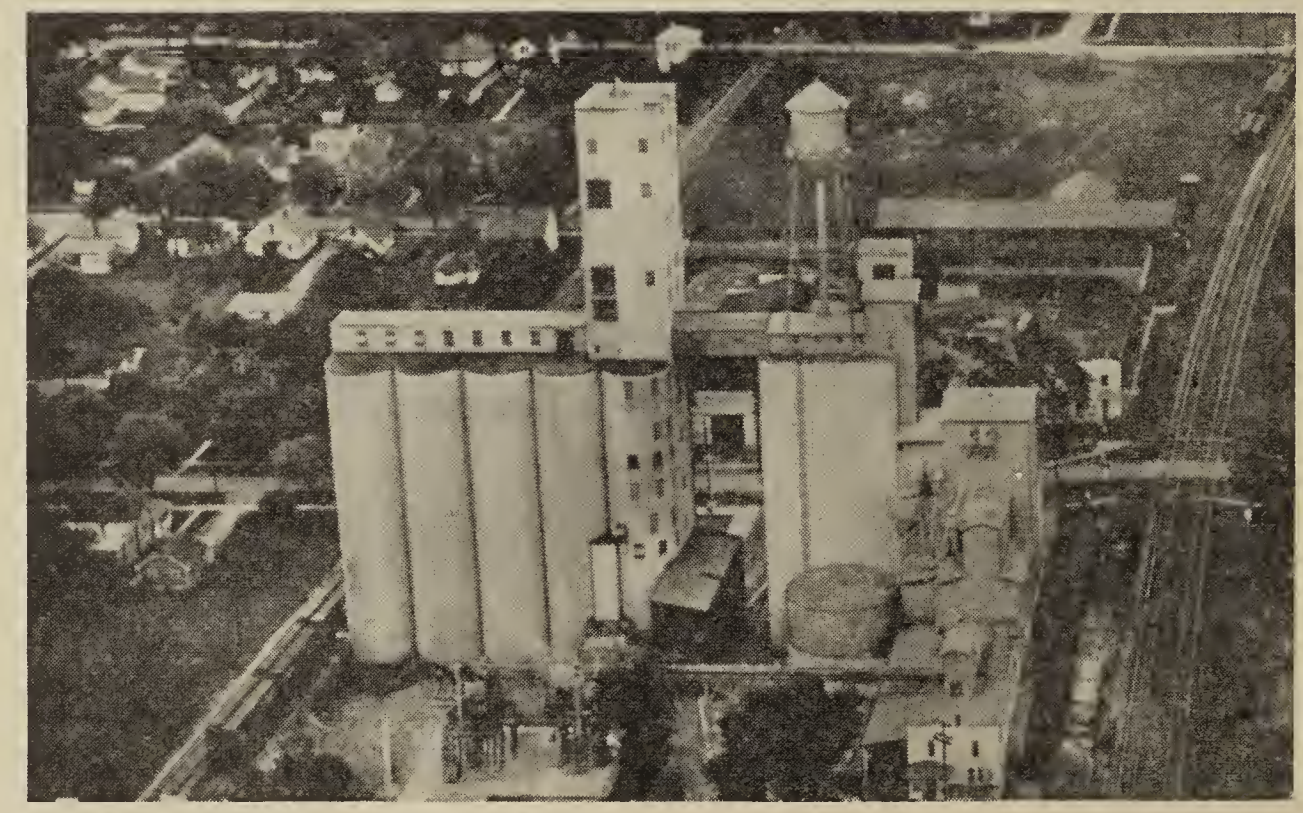


— 1943 —

10 YEARS OF PROGRESS

— 1953 —



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there were two frame school buildings in Van Wert. The one room schools were built of logs, then frame and many later were built of brick. At one time there were 116 of these schools in Van Wert County of which 15 were in two cities and the several towns, and 101 in the country. In this number were included all the schools of Delphos and the one school of Scott. A Normal School was conducted in Middle Point in the 1890's. The first centralized school was built in Ridge township in 1914.

We point with pride to the Brumback Public Library, the first county library in the world to be maintained from county funds. The building, inspired by the diligence of thirteen Van Wert women who started a lending library, was the gift of J. S. Brumback and his family. Branches of this library are in all towns and schools in the county.

A Pioneer Wagon

CHURCHES

Religion in the early days was confined to meetings in log cabins. Later there are records of early itinerate preachers and teachers. First known place for a denomination to worship was in the first Court House. Later the Methodist Episcopal Church erected a building on what is now a parking lot on the southeast corner of Jefferson and Jackson Streets. This building was not plastered and the seats were rough boards. The many church buildings found scattered over our county (at one time there were more than one hundred) attest to the fact that a devout Christian faith has added much to the strength and welfare of Van Wert County.

"JOHNNY APPLESEED"

One of the great preachers and teachers trekking through the Northwest Territory was John Chapman, known to the settlers as "Johnny Appleseed". Many residents, particularly those on the Ridge Road have family records relating anecdotes about this eccentric, gentle, lovable character who would not harm man or beast. He was a frequent visitor while making

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his many trips to and from eastern Ohio communities to what is now known as Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was noted for the planting of apple trees as well as his benevolence and christian training.

COUNTY UNITY

The value of the county unit has been appreciated in all efforts along the lines of progress. The proof that county spirit in Van Wert County has ever been strong is evidenced by the popularity of several county institutions and county activities. Our splendid Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A., the Marsh Foundation School as well as the creation of several funds for use in time of human need, are indicative of the high type of county, state and national patriotism that has placed Van Wert County in an enviable position in Ohio State history.

Through participation in our County Fair, an annual exhibition on a 54-acre plot with excellent Fair buildings, interest has been widespread in seed production, new varieties of plants and new skills are promoted. This encourages throughout the year, plowing contests, livestock shows and their resulting sales. The growth of the 4-H movement is well founded. Organization of Granges and other farm groups has added much to the history of their state and national organizations. The industrial growth of Van Wert city has been steadily advancing since 1920.

TRANSITION

Today 133 years after the first family settled in our county and during this Sesqui-Centennial of our statehood, our county's population has grown from these few families who settled in Willshire to at least 27,000 persons. Where the 406 square miles (259,840 acres) were covered by virgin forests, there are now 251,750 acres in fine farm lands divided into twelve townships. There are 1,800 miles of open ditches to drain this county. The first settlers were able to cultivate one or a fraction acres and today the average cultivated per farm is 130 acres. Home ownership of farms and homes is still very high, less than thirty percent of our farms being occupied by tenants. Early settlers paid a few dollars for an acre of ground, today the conservative average is considered at $200. Where corn and wheat were the principle crops, the new soya bean is now 23% of the $15,000,000 farm income as compared to 14% for corn and 7% for wheat. Where wooden products were once the principal industry (barrels) the containers fabricated and assembled here today are from paper and are winning national acceptance in their place. Where the early settlers worried about the trips to the mill in Piqua, Van Wert County now has miles of state, county and township road, railroads, connecting with transcontinental carriers, modern airport and transportation facilities of the best. Probably our chief concern today is for safety and tranquility of the future.

Surely Isaac Van Wert would be delighted with the city and county that bears his name. The marble monument erected to his memory in Tarrytown, New York, is overshadowed by this important political section of Ohio that is named for him.

Van Wert was one of the three captors of Major Andre, who was aiding Benedict Arnold in a traitorous plan to surrender the plans of West Point in Revolutionary days. As one of Andre's three captors, he was rewarded by Congress with a silver medal and an annual payment of $200, yet it remained for the hardy settlers and their descendants to design, develop and promote a county in a great state as a living memorial to Van Wert's deeds and valor.

—— C. D. PENNELL

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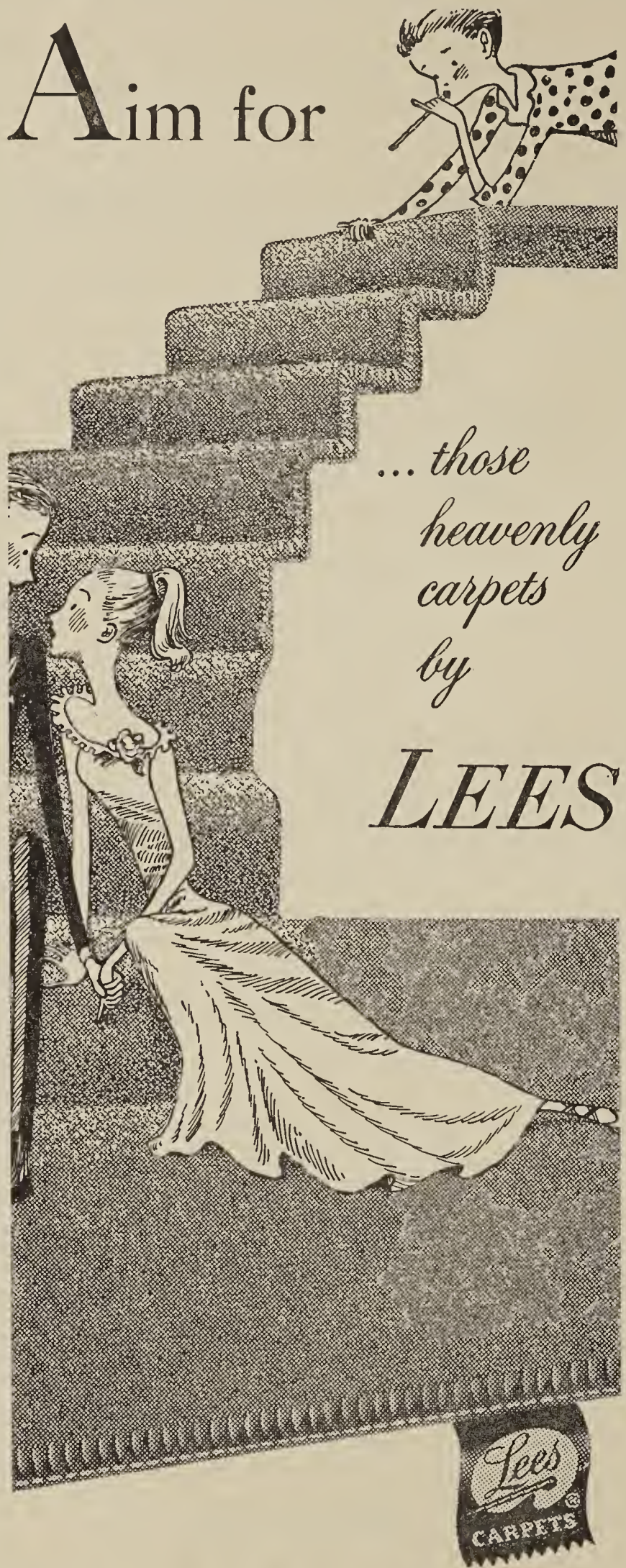

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A "FIRST RESIDENT'S" STORY

It is not often that in a community no older than is the City and County of Van Wert, there is available the story of incidents experienced by one who was there "when". Herewith is the story of Mrs. Matlida Brodnix who passed away in December, 1917 at the age of 83. This venerable pioneer is survived only by one grandson, B. B. Brodnix of 915 Park St.

Her story is presented in two parts. The first, The Brodnix Notes, a series of incidents as she dictated them to a friend in the year 1909. These notes have been corrected only so as to identify the locations mentioned.

The second part, The Brodnix MS, is taken from notes written by Mrs. Brodnix herself. No corrections or alterations have been made in her narrative. The materials in parenthesis has been added for the purpose of identifying locations. Any slight discrepancies of dates or facts will have to be charged to the fading memory of the story teller.

THE BRODNIX NOTES

James Watson Riley laid out Van Wert in town lots. He named the little Cook boy, who was only three months old when Mr. Riley came here, Riley, after himself. The child had been named but they changed it. Riley, holding the pen in the little fellows hand, wrote the child's name on a document giving little Riley a town lot.

One afternoon while we were talking together, Mrs. Brodnix said, "I wish the old times could be again. I would buy up town lots and be a rich woman; then I'd help the poor now." (Mrs. Brodnix at this time was about seventy-five years old).

Mrs. Brodnix's parents came here two years before the town was settled when she was only two and one-half years old.

People came and settled around the site of the town for miles around before it was laid out.

Up until Mrs. Brodnix, (then little Matilda Cook), was about seven years old, a number of Indian wigwams were on the site of the handsome home of Mr. J. W. McMillen. This home is now at the southwest corner of the Main and Shannon Streets intersection.

On what is now Main Street, there was no bridge across the creek but the settlers felled trees across the stream upon which to cross. The stream then was not nearly as wide as now, and a wilderness all around. No doubt this place was a very swampy region.

Upon the day the town lots were sold men on horse back flocked in to buy lots. There being only two houses then, Mrs. Cook provided food and shelter for many. She baked up a barrel of flour in four days for the men. Mr. Cook had been notified to be prepared to furnish meals for the newcomers.

A young girl, only, and she lived fifteen miles away was available to help Mrs. Cook. She was Eliza Brunson, afterwards Mrs. George Angevine. She took care of the little ones while Mrs. Cook prepared the meals.

Mrs. Cook made a large tick, or slip, out of muslin. As there was no straw she filled the tick with leaves. She put the tick upon the middle of the floor, and the men, to sleep, lay around this tick with their heads upon the edge.

The men fed their horses out of the sugar troughs.

Out of the sugar maples, even in those early days, the children of her family enjoyed some excellent taffy.

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As the men ate they put their money under their plates and Mrs. Cook read up the money with the dishes. Every plate had its coin, a quarter a plate.

Mr. Cook invested in considerable land in and around about what is now Van Wert. At the time Van Wert was laid out, Mr. Cook bought the whole square. What we call the McKim Square, this was the block, beginning at the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Washington Streets.

After the town was opened, the town's needs made themselves felt.

Mr. Cook started a grocery and dry goods store where now stands a jewelry store of Mr. Rowland. (N.W. corner of Main and Washington).

Mr. Rolland's jewelry store then was where Mr. Scholler's store now stands. In this building his family also lived. Following this need was that of a hotel or what was called a tavern. It was situated about where Mr. Hall's dry goods store and Mrs. Minnie Dillie—Dillie Johnson millinery stores now stand.

Mr. Cook bought a farm out where is now the old Burt place (700 block, S. side W. Main). There he built a log house, still keeping the grocery until others came in to establish stores. Upon this farm of eighty acres had been numerous wigwams but the Indians had all left that place. The whites gradually usurped the lands of the Indians while the Indians were gradually leaving.

Mrs. Brodnix said if you were good to the Indians they were good to you, but if they made them angry at you, you might as well say good-by to yourself. The Indians as a tribe were friendly to the whites.

Mrs. Brodnix spoke of a fight of two Indian brothers, when she was about ten years old. The jail then was a log one and stood near the site of the old brick jail before our present substantial stone building was built. At the time of this writing in 1909 there was another log house still standing in the town of Van Wert. It was built about the time the town was laid out. It was on Raymond Street.

Mrs. Brodnix's family came in a big covered wagon, for there were no railroads then in this part of Ohio. Mr. Cook came from Mansfield and must have taken about a week on the journey. There were three little children, the oldest only five. All three children had the whooping cough. While the father guided the team over rough and muddy roads sometimes making only ten miles a day, the mother would sometimes get out of the wagon and walk, at times carrying two children, for the little ones would grow tired in the wagon and the weary mother would carry them until too tired to go further.

THE BRODNIX MS

When my father, Daniel Cook, moved from Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio, to Van Wert, which was then a wilderness, there were but two houses, one empty. We occupied that one. The other family's name was Dodds. They were here I suppose about one year and then Mrs. Dodds died and was buried in the old cemetery. At that time not a stick of timber was cleared, all wood then. Mr. Dodd and his little daughter Hattie, moved away about two years after we moved here. The town was laid out by Mr. James Watson Riley. My brother Riley Cook was named after him.

It took my father one week to go to Mansfield and back for a load of groceries and provisions, nothing but mud roads. When the town was laid out my mother did all the cooking

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and baking for all of the people. I have heard her say that she baked up a barrel of flour in four days and it was all eaten. She did all her cooking and baking in an out-oven and by the fire-place. She knew nothing about a cook stove.

She couldn't get any one to help her but a small girl to take care of the children. (Eliza Brunson, afterwards Mrs. George Angevine).

There weren't any white families living within miles of here, plenty of Indians and wild animals of all kinds. My father would go out hunting and kill maybe ten or fifteen deer a day and bring home the hams and hides and leave the rest in the woods for the wild animals, such as wolves and bears. I remember one day I was going home from school, about a square from the house sat a big black bear eating a hog that he had killed, but when he saw me he ran off in the woods.

I had to go to school a mile through the woods, all alone, only I would take two dogs along with me for company. I would take dinner enough for all the dogs, for the dogs would stay until school was out and we would all go home together. We could hear the wolves howling then we would run, I tell you.

The school house I went to was a log one. I never went to school in any other. I went to school only about three years in my life, for my mother died when I was sixteen years old and I had to keep house.

My father would dry the venison and hides. When he would get a wagon load, he would go to Mansfield with a big two-horse covered wagon and trade the meat and hides for groceries and provisions. It would take him a week to go and get back.

My brother, Riley Cook was the first white boy that trod the soils of Van Wert. My sister, Robertta Cook Coe was the first white child born in Van Wert. She was named after Mrs. Dodds.

There were droves of Indians at that time. As high as one hundred would pass our house at a time and would water their ponies at our well. When ready to leave, the squaws would have their papooses strapped on their backs. There were Indian tents all through the woods.

When we moved here, I would go and see them nearly every day and take them something. They would give me cooked venison in return. The way they would cook it, they would put a piece of meat on a stick and hold it over the fire. I would think it wasn't good and when I would get quite a distance from the tent, I would lay it on a log or stump. They, the Indians, never eat butter on their bread, nothing but lard. My mother always kept a keg of lard full for them in the smoke house and they would come and get it whenever they needed it. We were always good and kind to them.

One time there were two Indian brothers got to fighting and one killed the other and the people put him in jail. He told them if they would let him take a walk each day for an hour, he would come back, and he would. He would come out to our house. We lived then on the farm a mile out of town, now called the Burt place. He would come every day and stay until it was time to go back. I would set on his lap. I wasn't afraid. What was I to be afraid of? I can't remember what they did with him.

Whatever an Indian would say he would or would not do, he would. We were good and kind to them. My father had the first grocery and dry goods store in Van Wert and the first hotel. The grocery and house we lived in before we moved to the farm was where the

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old McKim block is and the hotel a little west of that.

He owned all of the square at that time. Our lights were tallow candles and lamps by putting grease in something and a wick in to make a light. We knew nothing about coal oil in those times. There used to be a spring of water in the cellar of the house.

One day my sister Lydia and I were gathering blackberries in the woods where Wisman's grocery (First room south of alley on west side of Washington St. in 1st block—now Goodsell's) now is and one of us hit our foot against something. I forget which one it was. We took the leaves and dirt off and there was a half a bushel of bullets buried in a tin can, but we couldn't get them out, so we went home and told my father and he went with us and dug them out and took them home. He said the Indians had buried them there.

Then another time we were going along through the woods where the Penn property is now occupied by Cupps. One of us stepped on a soft place and went down to our waist; this was afterward found to be a spring of water (1st two lots north of Pennsylvania R.R. on west side of Jefferson St.). I think that it is there yet.

One night, when it was all woods yet there was a panther went through town and gave one scream. Our dogs all jumped into the house through the window, for our window lights were greased paper in those days. Its mate was killed out west and it was going east. We learned afterward it was killed out east.

One time after dark my mother went out quite a piece from the house to lay the rails down for the cow to go to her calf for she knew if the mother wasn't with it the wolves would eat up the calf. Just as she got the rails down a pack of wolves set up a scream. My mother said she thought they were close to her. She threw the lantern and each jump she took she gave a scream until she got to the house.

That big willow tree that stands on the Burt place my father planted there sixty-five years ago in the year of eighteen hundred and thirty-nine (The willow tree mentioned grew to be an immense tree and stood in front of the Burt home on West Main St., until within recent years). I was but a small child and stood beside him and saw him plant it. It was but a limb off another tree.

THE END

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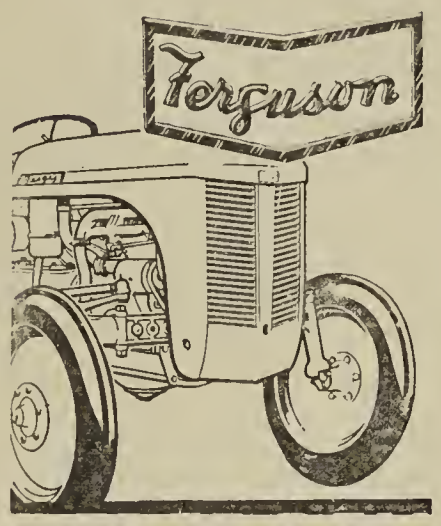

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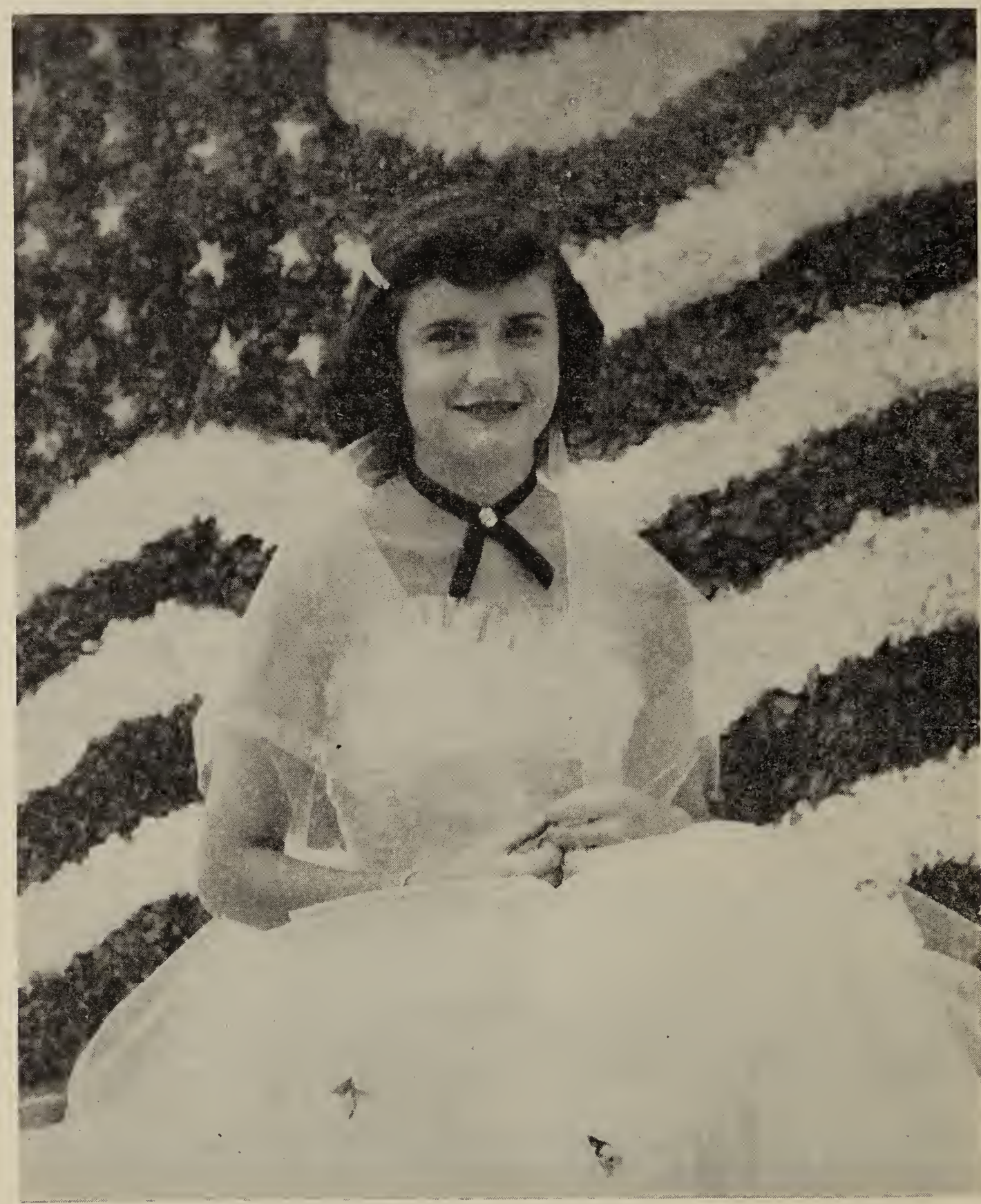

PATRICIA McCOLLUM

QUEEN OF VAN WERT COUNTY'S OHIO SESQUI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION "TRAILS OF TIME"

Inasmuch as this program went to press before the selection of the candidates for the Court of Honor their names are not included.

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Staged and Directed by

ROBERT WAYNE POWERS

"PROLOGUE"

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EPISODE ONE . . . "INDIANS OF THE LAND UNKNOWN"

This scene is dedicated to the story of the Red Men—the Indians who roamed this land of ours so many years ago. You will see members of our community cast in the roles of Indians—performing their daily work, setting up tepees and establishing villages in which work and play took place. One of the highlights of this episode will be a dance to "The Sun God", performed by the Indian Maidens.

EPISODE TWO . . . "THE SPIRIT OF '76"

As we watch a living replica of the Spirit of Freedom, we are reminded that our freedom was not dropped upon us "As the Gentle Rains from Heaven," but was fought for and won by brave men and women who elected as their first President—General George Washington.

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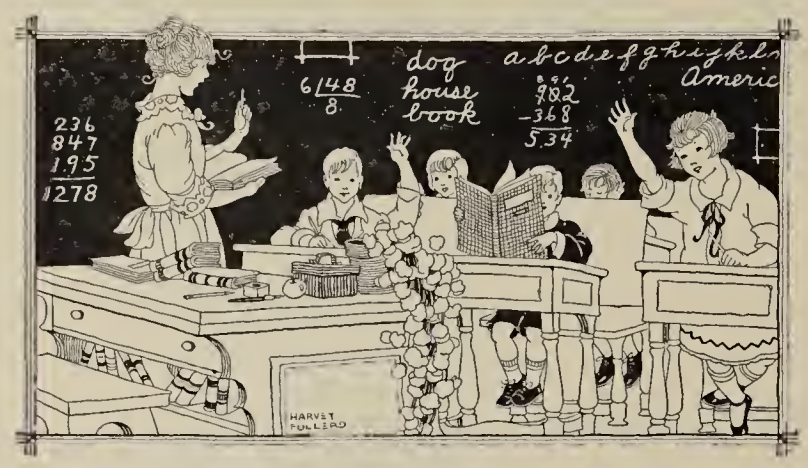
EPISODE THREE . . . "THE TREATY OF GREENVILLE"

We witness a scene that had a great effect—not only on Ohio—but on the rest of the country as well—for the Indian Wars were concluded and peace brought to the Frontier—by the Treaty of Greenville. You will see General Anthony Wayne meet with Indian Chieftains and participate with them in their Peace Pipe Ritual.

EPISODE FOUR . . . "THE FIRST SETTLERS"

Across the lands soon came the pioneers. Mile after weary mile they drove their cumbersome wagons whose wheels sang out a creaking song as they ground their way toward the Van Wert of the future. We will see the log cabin homes of our first settlers and watch the arrival of wagon trains, sharing with them their hardships and pleasures.



EPISODE FIVE . . . "EDUCATION ON THE NEW FRONTIER"

In the year 1827—the first school in the county was a little log building on the public square of Willshire. Our School system from the earliest days has grown into one of the finest in the state. But in this scene—we return to one of the early schools, to share with the teachers some of the problems of teaching the "Three R's."

EPISODE SIX . . . "THE DUEL AT DOG CREEK"

Out of our colorful history comes the sad legend of an Indian Princess who could not decide between her two suitors. In accordance with Indian Law—the braves met at Dog Creek—and there—in the presence of the Indian Maiden, fought a duel in which both were killed. They were placed to rest on the spot of their duel, and in years to come, a group of apple trees grew there, as a living monument. From where did the trees come? Legend has it that they were planted by another colorful character from our past—Johnny Appleseed.

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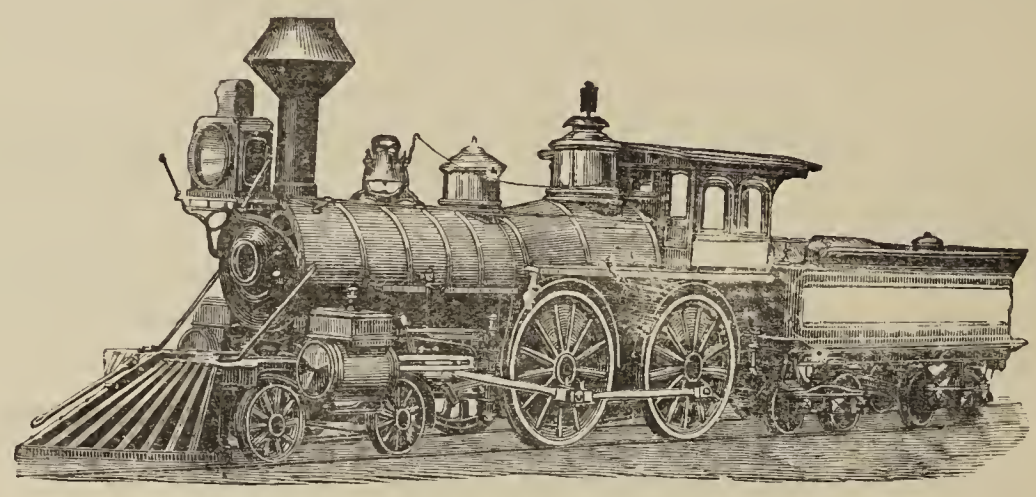
EPISODE SEVEN . . . "JOHNNY APPLESEED"

In the year 1839—John W. Chapman—better known as Johnny Appleseed paid a visit to Alexander McCoy in Ridge Township—and then planted seeds on property owned by Daniel Beard. This scene is a re-enactment of his visit to our section.

EPISODE EIGHT . . . "FREEDOM OF RELIGION"

Not only did our early pioneers bring with them determination and courage—they also brought that priceless gift—faith in God. At first there were no churches, and family worship played an important part in the life of most families. We bring to life in this episode a religious service typical of those held back in the days of the rough wooden benches and circuit riding Preachers.



EPISODE NINE . . . "THE IRON HORSE"

Just one hundred years ago—in 1853—the first railroad came to Van Wert. Until that time —from 1845 the Canal was the most important mode of transportation. What excitement when the "Iron Horse" arrived! In this scene we go down to the tracks and join the good folks who anxiously awaited that **first** train.

EPISODE TEN . . . "REBELLION"

In April, 1861—President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to preserve the Union. Van Wert had a noble record during the war . . . and though it was the bloodiest civil conflict ever known on the face of the earth—when it was ended—the nation was delivered.

EPISODE ELEVEN . . . "THE FIRST FIRE FIGHTERS"

In 1890—the Van Wert Hose Company Number 1 and the Buckeye Hook and Ladder Company were organized. Up until that time the fire fighters had used the old hand drawn pumper—purchased in 1871. As we watch the old "fire-fighting laddies" in action—we smile proudly as we compare our present, fine fire department—with that of yesteryears.

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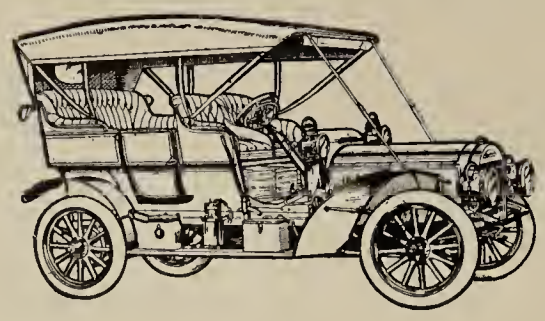


EPISODE TWELVE . . . "THE GAY '90's"

It was the era of "The Bicycle Built for Two," "Leg o' Mutton Sleeves," and "Wasp-like-Waists." Everyone was in the mood for basket picnics—or a rollicking game of croquet. The innovation called the "horseless carriage" made its appearance and caused quite a sensation. As we turn back the pages of our history—we enjoy the "Bathing Beauties"—the "Naughty Can-Can Girls" of the Medicine Shows—all good clean fun, reminiscent of the days when "Grandma" was in her teens!

EPISODE THIRTEEN . . . "VAN WERT'S BOOK OF FAME"

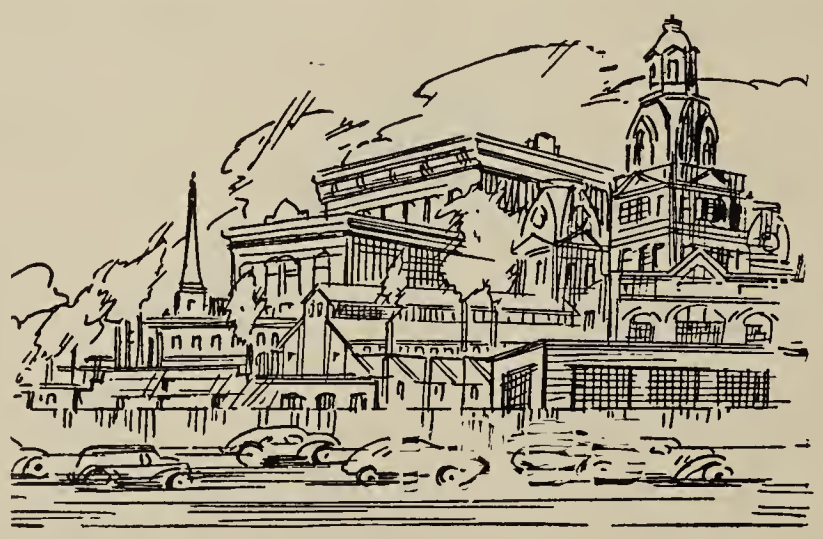
We pause here to present Van Wert's Book of Fame. . . . Men and Women whose presence in our midst have enriched the entire community and made the country better for their having lived in it.

EPISODE FOURTEEN . . . "THE SESQUI-CADETS"

In a tribute to the youth of Van Wert—we present the "Sesqui-Cadets," in a COLORFUL and beautiful panorama in dance.

EPISODE FIFTEEN . . . "LEST WE FORGET"

Where were you on that bright late autumn Sunday afternoon of December 7, 1941? It was then that with startling suddenness the news of war came to the United States for the second time in a generation. Van Wert was represented in every theater of the war. Anzio, Guadalcanal, Battle of the Bulge—there our boys fought—struggled—died!



EPISODE SIXTEEN . . . "THE WHEEL OF PROGRESS"

To the great story of Ohio—our own county has contributed one of the most colorful chapters. To the great American ideals for which Ohio stands—she has given of her blood. As we review the panorama of our history, however—it is not to boast—rather are we humbled that the past has bequeathed to us so rich a heritage and it is in that spirit that we face forward to meet the challenge of a changing world, striving toward the great principle of Freedom, Peace and Progress for all the world.

The management reserves the right to make any necessary performance changes.

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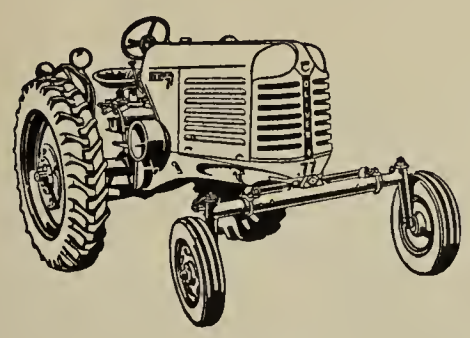

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At 11:45 A.M. on April 7, 1903, the boiler on old #108, pictured above, exploded in the round house of the Cincinnati Northern R. R. yards, destroying the six middle stalls. Fortunately the workmen had left for lunch a short time before, so none were killed...

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Airplane View, Van Wert, About 1928

Van Wert, Main Street, About 1928

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In 1900 Noah Clifton built for himself the first car built and owned in Van Wert. The motor was a single cylinder affair from a section of cast iron water pipe. The ignition was the hot tube type, heated to a glow by a gasoline torch which Clifton also made. The carriage was a buggy steered by the little crank shown in the picture.

The top speed was 12 miles an hour, and gasoline was obtainable only in drug stores as a by-product of kerosene.

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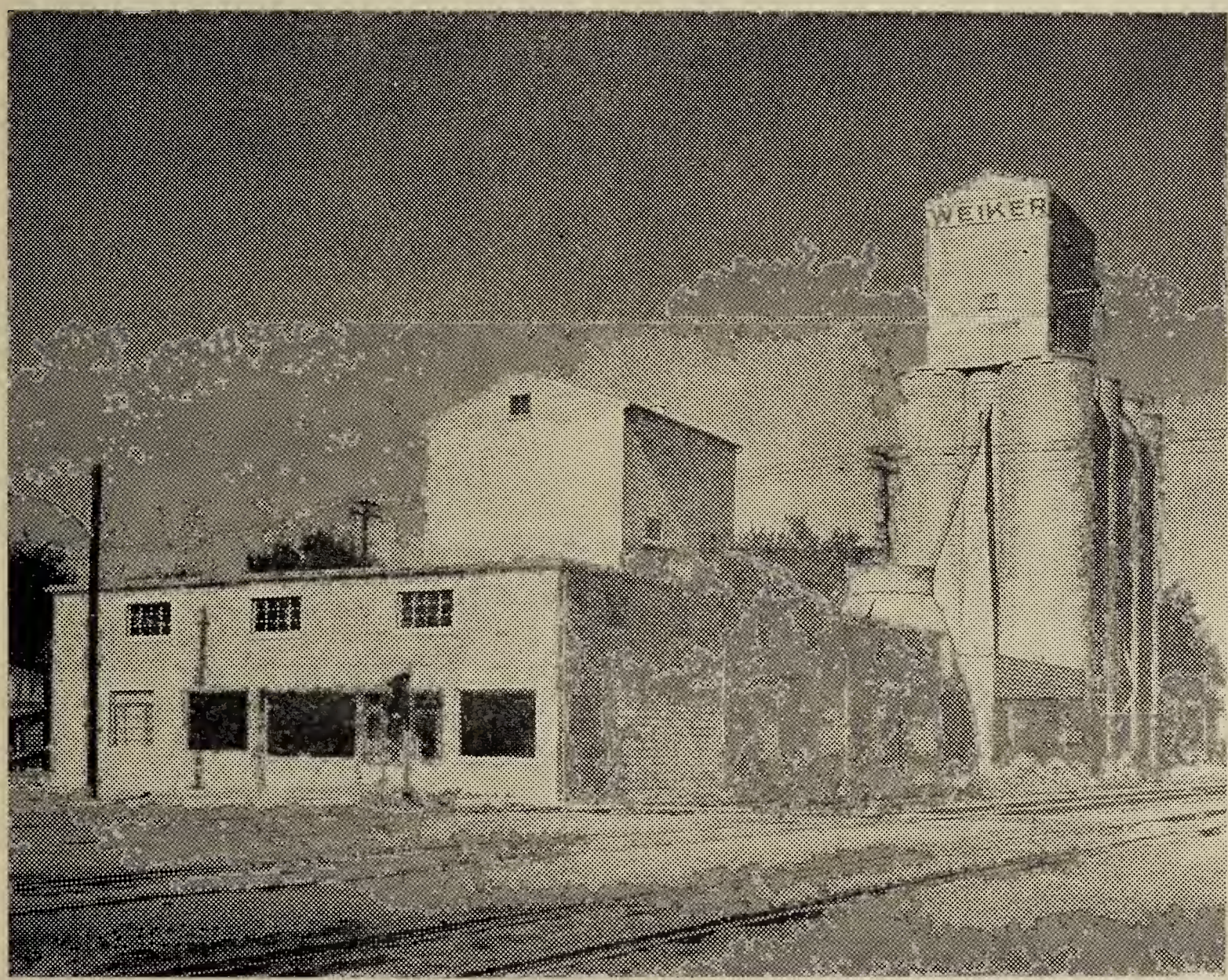

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